

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This amendment is filed along with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) Patent Application. Applicant has reviewed the final Office Action dated March 10, 2003 and the Advisory Action dated May 30, 2003. In response to the Actions, the specification is amended to correct a typing error; claims 1, 11, 21, and 24 are amended. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to consider the following remarks.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by de Hita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,081,774) (hereinafter "de Hita"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites a method of providing a context sensitive mapping of a plurality of help informational items in an information retrieval system, which comprises the steps of providing a database having one or more record entries, the one or more record entries defining relationships between originating locations from which help requests are originated and corresponding ones of the plurality of help informational items, and said one or more record entries each including an associated relationship strength value based on historical frequency of respective said corresponding ones of said plurality of help informational items being selected by a user within the same information retrieval session initiated from said originating locations; upon detection of a user initiation of a help information retrieval session from an originating location, determining whether one or more matching record entries exist in said database for said originating location; and providing, if said one or more matching record entries exist, an access to one or more associated help informational items corresponding to said originating location according to said one or more record entries.

The present invention allows a user to efficiently navigate through a plurality of informational items without looking for the same information with duplicated time and effort. The information retrieval system in accordance with the principles of the present invention maintains a database that defines a relational association between a plurality of informational items in the system. The relational association is based on historical navigational behavior of

users of the information retrieval system, and includes, among others, relationship strength which is based on the historical frequency of related informational items being selected by a user within the same information retrieval session (see page 5, lines 19-22). Accordingly, during a subsequent selection of an informational item, any informational items related to the selected informational item can be provided to a user without reinventing the wheel.

de Hita does not disclose or teach such information retrieval system. de Hita describes a natural language information retrieval system for searching user's natural language query. More particularly, as described in de Hita, a user presents a search request in the form of natural language query 160. The natural language interface 170 linguistically processes the natural language query 160 and searches the database index created by the development system 102 in accordance with the present invention for terms which are contained in the query (column 8, lines 1-2 and lines 15-19). In addition, the development system 102 is a non-real-time development subsystem used by a software developer 110 to perform linguistic text processing of the language-based database help project 114 (column 6, lines 22-25). Further, de Hita discloses that the development system 102 is preferably implemented in software and, more preferably, is configured as a software developer's kit (SDK) (column 6, lines 35-37). de Hita does not disclose or teach a database having one or more record entries that define relationships between originating locations from which help requests are originated and corresponding ones of the plurality of help informational items, and the one or more record entries each including an associated relationship strength value based on historical frequency of respective the corresponding ones of the plurality of help informational items being selected by a user within the same information retrieval session initiated from the originating locations, as recited in claim 1. Nowhere in de Hita does it address or appreciate the problems described in the background of the invention, e.g. user wasting time and effort in navigating informational items within the same information retrieval session. Thus, there is no motivation in de Hita to suggest or teach the recited invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over de Hita.

Claims 11, 21, 24 and the dependent claims also recite the above discussed features. Thus, claims 11, 21, 24 and the dependent claims are patentable over de Hita.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Consideration of the present application and a favorable response are respectfully requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues, please contact the below signed at 612-752-7367.

Respectfully submitted,

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